

VZCZCXYZ0000  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #1425 3380822  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 040822Z DEC 09  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2859  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9560  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0951

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 001425

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/P, EAP/PD - THOMAS HAMM  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT OBAMA'S ADDRESS ON AFGHANISTAN

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage December 4 on the lead-up to the city mayors' and county magistrates' elections scheduled for December 5; and on a Taiwan-born fashion designer, who won the award in the Gen Art's Styles International Design Competition's "avant-gardes" category in New York on Wednesday. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" discussed U.S. President Barack Obama's Tuesday address on Afghanistan and questioned the viability of Obama's plan to duplicate the United States' strategy in Iraq and use it in Afghanistan. End summary.

"Is It Viable to Duplicate the 'Iraq Strategy' in Afghanistan?"

The "International Lookout" column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] wrote (12/4):

"It appears that the U.S. government is moving the strategy it implemented in Iraq 'to pretend to move ahead in order to hide its intention to retreat' to Afghanistan. Should this be the case, it is perhaps because [U.S. President Barack] Obama failed to come up with any better resolution and will just give this a try for the time being. But the strategy 'to pretend to move ahead in order to hide its intention to retreat' only produced effects in Iraq for a while and cannot resolve the problem completely. Besides, Afghanistan is no Iraq; will it really work if one uses pain killers for a headache to cure diarrhea? ...

"In Afghanistan, Obama is also thinking of sending more troops there in the short run, and has urged other 'allies' to do the same. But unlike the armed groups scattered within the boundary of Iraq, the Taliban is an organized armed force with rich combat experience. The armed groups in Iraq aim to push the U.S. troops out of its territory by encircling and harassing them. But the goal of the Taliban is to regain political power in Afghanistan, and with the support of some of the Afghanistan people, particularly the Pashtuns, it will be difficult for the United States to undermine and isolate it. ... What about Afghanistan? One can use 'a great mess' to sum up the recent presidential election in Afghanistan, where those in charge of election matters were involved in fraudulent practices and the opposition factions did not recognize the legitimacy of the election results. Even the United States could not do anything about it; all it could do was to force itself to recognize the corrupt Karzai administration. Will this administration be able to rule Afghanistan for the United States?"

STANTON